

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

First--I am a writer and artist, a content creator myself. so I understand the importance of copyright.

But it's also important to me that I can make copies FOR PERSONAL USE, and then use them on a variety of devices in a variety of places. In my living room, bed room, car, office, or friend's house.

It's also important that there's backward compatibility, so that my current devices are not made obsolete.

This is how Fair use works today, and how it must continue to work in the future.

The public demands and requires that any technologies proposed preserve consumers' fair use have been tested and demonstrated publicly.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices? Home networks are increasingly important as technology becomes more pervasive, and I want to see public demonstrations that this new technology does not inhibit my ability to use a home network for ALL digital content.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

It should not be necessary for consumers to carry the expense of new equipment. Our current devices should continue to work with new content. Something recorded in a new CD burner should still play on old CD players. This is common sense, and also an economic requirement.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

New digital technology opens up a world of creative possibilities for artists, writers, musicians, and regular people who want to express themselves.

As always, professionals need to take care to use copyrighted materials in legal ways.

The broadcast flag and other new digital rights technologies must NOT infringe on the fair use rights of individuals to be able to sample and use images and sound in their own personal creations, meant for non-commercial use--things like family videos (made on their computer, sent to grandma to view on hers), etc.

As individuals, we need to retain the right to copy their music onto different devices. Record TV programs for later viewing or their own archival collection for personal use.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement

would have on consumer electronics equipment?

If it can co-exist with current devices, if new content can be played on old devices, and old content on new devices, then the cost would be incurred only in the price of new devices. Even so, we must take care to ensure that the additional cost on these new devices is negligible. Consumers must not be made to carry any significant financial burden to protect digital rights.

Other Comments:

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT INDIVIDUAL CONTENT CREATORS ARE ABLE TO AFFORD TO CREATE CONTENT THAT WORKS ON NEW DEVICES.

I have always been on the cutting edge of technology and content. I produced the first national magazine that was distributed electronically. I was one of the first on the web, and am now creating e-books. So while I want my work protected, I don't want my customers to suffer undo inconvenience. I don't want them to be unable to move my content from device to device.

Things like e-books need the ability to be shared, just as paper books are today. People need to be able to lend digital content to their friends or co-workers just as they can do now, otherwise this new technology is LESS useful, rather than more useful.

Whatever DRM solutions are made necessary, it's VITAL THAT SMALL CONTENT CREATORS CAN AFFORD THESE SYSTEMS.

I'm concerned that digital rights management will become so complex and costly that it will shut out individual content creators.

This is already happening in the digital book market. To protect an e-book, content creators need expensive software DRM servers, or they need to go through companies that have them, companies that then take 50% or more of the price of a product.

If this happens, then only large corporations are offered protection--which is not what copyright law is meant to do.

This could effectively shut out individual artists, writers and musicians so their content would not play on new devices.

Your decisions have to take into account the fact that the world is no longer composed solely of large corporations that distribute content.

The web has democratized content distribution and it would be un-democratic if individual content creators do not have affordable equal access when creating content for new devices.